

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5245

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 8036

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PFOR ET SU

SUBJECT: MORE ON SUDANESE REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA

REF: ADDIS 7867

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: RADIO ETHIOPIA, JULY 2, CARRIED INTERVIEW IN AMHARIC WITH H.E. ATO TAYE RETTA, VICE MINISTER AND MININT. INTERVIEW DEALT WITH "NEWLY ARRIVING REFUGEES FROM SOUTHERN SUDAN." IN SUMMARY, VICE MINISTER INDICATED THAT REFUGEES BEGAN ARRIVING IN GAMBELLA LAST APRIL. FLOW CONTINUES AND CONSISTS PRIMARILY OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND OLD PEOPLE. VICE MINISTER STATED THAT AT PEAK OF SUDANESE CIVIL WAR APPROXIMATELY 22,000 SUDANESE REFUGEES HAD COME TO ETHIOPIA (VICE 12,000 ALLEGEDLY HERE NOW) WHERE THEY REMAINED "FOR 7 TO 8 YEARS." MOST OF THESE REFUGEES WERE REPATRIATED, TAYE SAID, UNDER THE 1972 AGREEMENT WHICH ENDED SUDANESE FIGHTING.

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2. TAYE WAS ASKED WHY REFUGEES NOW COMING TO ETHIOPIA. HE

REPLIED THAT REFUGEES CLAIM 1972 AGREEMENT NOT RPT NOT BEING PUT INTO EFFECT. THEY CLAIM THEY ARE BEING OPPRESSED AND THAT THEY WERE FIRED FROM THEIR JOBS. ASKED WHY REFUGEES HAD SELECTED ETHIOPIA AS THEIR HAVEN, VICE MINISTER THOUGHT REASON LIKELY WAS GEOGRAPHICAL PROPINQUITY. IN RESPONSE REPORTER'S QUESTION VICE MINISTER ADDED THAT ETHIOPIA OBLIGATED ACCEPT THE REFUGEES UNDER 1945 GENEVA CONVENTION, 1967 GENEVA PROTOCOL AND OAU CHARTER. TAYE NOTED THAT THIS REFUGEE PROBLEM BROUGHT BY EPMG TO ATTENTION OF OAU AND "GENEVA OFFICE" (PRESUMABLY UNHCR). EPMG HOPED THAT THESE ORGANIZATIONS WOULD CONTRIBUTE CLOTHING AND MEDICINE FOR THESE SUDANESE REFUGEES." END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL: ACCORDING TO SUDANESE COLLEAGUE REFUGEES WHO ARE PRIMARILY NUER AND ANNUAK -- TRIBES WHICH STRADDLE THE SUDANESE-ETHIOPIAN FRONTIER -- ARE BEING DRAWN INTO ETHIOPIA BY EXPECTATION OF SUBSTANTIAL SUBSISTENCE BENEFITS. SUDANESE EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT DURING SUDANESE CIVIL WAR SUDANESE REFUGEES IN ETHIOPIA RECEIVED ETH \$100 PER CAPITA (PER MONTH (?) OR ETH \$175 PER FAMILY PLUS A FREE EDUCATION, CLOTHING AND MEDICAL CARE. SUDANESE COLLEAGUE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE IS SOME TRIBAL FIGHTING GOING ON IN SOUTHERN SUDAN BUT CLAIMED BARIA TRIBE (CF REFTTEL) NOT RPT NOT INVOLVED AS THEY ARE "EQUATROIALS." SUDANESE COLLEAGUE CONVEYED, HOWEVER, THAT HIS EMBASSY IS READING EPMG PUBLICITY ON REFUGEE ISSUE AS COMBINATION OF PRESSURE AND WARNING TO GOS TO MAINTAIN ETHIO-SUDANESE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITHIN BOUNDS. IN OTHER WORDS, EPMG HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO GROWING NUMBER ERITREAN REFUGEES IN SUDAN AND SUDANESE POSZ VIZ-A-VIZ ERITREAN INSURGENCY AND, COLLEAGUE FELT, IS TAKING THIS MEANS OF REMINDING KHARTOUM OF SUDANESE VULNERABILITIES IN THE SOUTH.

4. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR CONCURS IN THIS READING. HE CHARACTERIZED CURRENT SUDANESE-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS FLATLY AS "STRAINED." EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ALSO THOUGHT THAT OLD ANSAR REFUGEE COMMUNITY UNDER INFLUENCE OF AL-HINDI GROWING AGAIN, BUT SUDANESE COLLEAGUE FLATLY DENIES THIS. ACCORDING SUDANESE, AL-HINDI AND HIS CAUSE LONG SINCE OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS AND REFUGEES IN QUESTION ARE EXCLUSIVELY SOUTHERNERS. WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE.
HUMMEL

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